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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington D.C. 20250 (202) 447-4330

Letter No. 2455

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
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April 6, 1990

EARTH DAY CELEBRATION -- USDA will hold a special Earth Day celebration and open house Saturday, April 21 in Washington, D.C., in the new office of USDA's Forest Service. The offices are in the renovated, historic Auditor's Building at 14th & Independence Ave., S.W. Visitors will be able to hear three master storytellers -- Judith Black of Marblehead, Mass.; Jackson Gillman of Portland Maine; and John Spelman of Washington, D.C. -- present eight performances featuring environmental themes. They'll also get to meet Smokey Bear & Woodsy Owl. Contact: Sharon Prell (202) 382-0414.

NATIONAL CONSUMERS WEEK will be April 22 to 28 this year. In honor of the occasion, the Office of the Special Adviser to the President for Consumer Affairs in cooperation with USDA has issued a Consumer's Resource Handbook. The handbook is chock-full of tips on how to be a smart consumer -- how to get the most for your money & avoid consumer problems -- and who to contact when you have a problem. For a copy of the Consumer's Resource Handbook, call: Marci Hilt (202) 447-6445.

THINK TWICE BEFORE LETTING CHILDREN do farm work, says Elston Grubaugh, an extension ag engineer at New Mexico State University. "Farming is not for the lazy and certainly not for children," he says. "Farming is among the few industries where youngsters under 16 are seriously, sometimes fatally, injured in significant numbers." Contact: Elston Grubaugh (505) 646-2021.

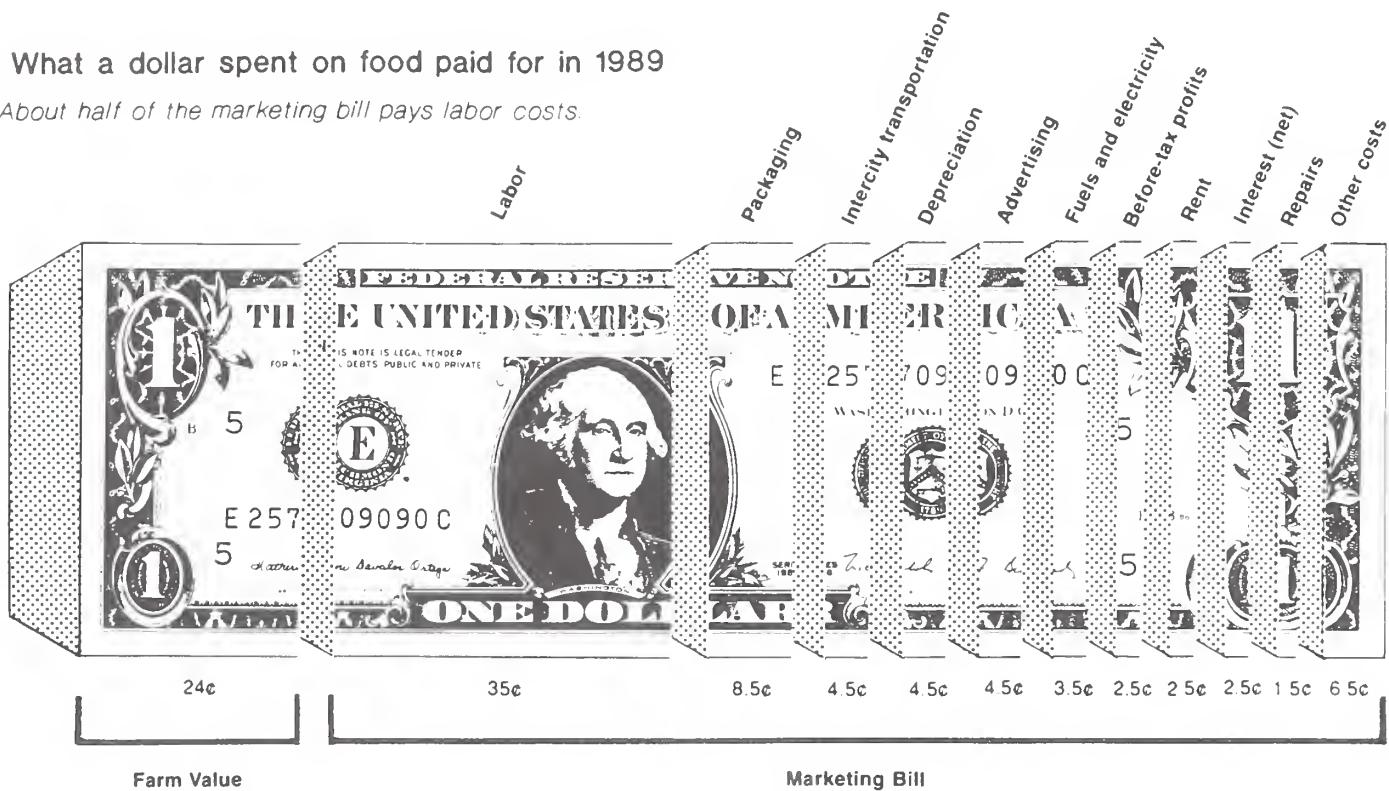
THIRSTY CATTLE -- USDA has waived some import restrictions so cattle from sections of Mexico with severe drought can be temporarily imported to the U.S. so they won't starve. "The drought-stricken pasturelands in parts of Mexico cannot support the cattle," says James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA's Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service. "By bringing the animals temporarily to U.S. quarantined feedlots under strict movement restrictions, we can avert starvation of the animals and still protect the health of U.S. livestock." Contact: Anita Brown (301) 436-5931.

ADAMS NAMED -- Lester M. Crawford, administrator of USDA's Food Safety & Inspection Service, has appointed Catherine E. Adams to the recently-established position of assistant administrator of the agency. Adams will direct agency efforts to harmonize food safety standards & policies of USDA, the Food & Drug Administration, the Environmental Protection Agency and international food safety advisory bodies. Contact: Jim Greene (202) 382-0314.

BLUE CORN -- Blue corn is becoming a unique candidate for low-input Southwest agriculture, says George Dickerson, an extension horticulturist with New Mexico State University. The blue corn development program began in 1983. New Mexico blue corn acreage jumped from 860 acres in 1986 to 2,550 acres in 1989. The increased acreage can probably be attributed to increased demand, Dickerson says. "Besides the traditional blue corn tortilla, processors have introduced many new products including blue corn chips, muffins and pancake mixes, and even corn flakes," he says. Contact: George Dickerson (505) 275-2576.

What a dollar spent on food paid for in 1989

About half of the marketing bill pays labor costs.



Includes food eaten at home and away from home. Other costs include property taxes and insurance, accounting and professional services, promotion, bad debts, and many miscellaneous items.

FOOD COSTS -- Now you know where your food dollar is going. Retail food prices rose more last year than in most other years in the decade. Food prices in 1989 averaged 5.8 percent above those in 1988. The 1989 price increase was the largest since 1981 and was due, in part, to the lingering effects of the 1988 drought. This graphic comes from a new USDA booklet: Food Costs ... From Farm to Retail in 1989. For more information, call: Denis Dunham (202) 786-1870. For a copy of the booklet, call: Marci Hilt (202) 447-6445.

COPPER DEFICIENCY & ALCOHOLISM -- Too little copper in the diet & too much alcohol may cause damaged heart muscles & other internal ravages of alcoholism, says USDA Biochemist Meira Fields. Fields says the results of rat studies indicate it takes both dietary factors to produce damaged heart muscle, anemia, fatty liver & elevated levels of several toxic metabolites -- all classic effects of alcoholism. Contact: Meira Fields (301) 344-2417.

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1713 -- Dave Carter talks with USDA experts & farmers about the impact of the 1985 farm bill on this year's farm bill. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 min. documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1195 -- Hurricane Hugo cleanup continues; dining out & nutrition; menu changes; community tree planting; 4-H observations of a changing world. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 - 3 min. consumer features.)

AGRITAPE #1702 -- USDA news highlights; planting intentions; industrial uses for crops; environmental issues & the farm bill; water quality projects. (Weekly reel of news features.)

NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1314 -- Mite-resistant bees; human benefits from alfalfa; mass rearing wasps; fungicide virus combination; farming with lasers. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Mon., April 16, milk production; Tues., April 17, crop/weather update, Wed., April 18, ag outlook; Thurs., April 19, dairy outlook; Fri., April 20, livestock update, ag resources, cattle on feed, livestock slaughter; Mon., April 23, rice outlook, U.S. trade update, catfish.

DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.
Material changed at 5 p.m. EDT each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE
(April 5, 7 & 9)

FEATURES -- DeBoria Janifer reports on Chilean fruit imports; Lynn Wyvill takes a look at Easter egg safety; Chris Larson examines the Hurricane Hugo cleanup.

ACTUALITIES -- Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter on planting intentions for farmers; Norton Strommen on weather & crop conditions; David Harvey on aquaculture; Peter Buzzanell on sugars & sweeteners; Verner Grise on tobacco.

NEXT WEEK -- Pat O'Leary reports on farming with LISA; Lynn Wyvill takes a look at global warming; and Will Pemble examines producing leaner lamb.

Available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8:

THURSDAY 7:30-7:45 p.m., EDT, Transponder 12D
SATURDAY 10:30-11:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 10D
MONDAY 8:30-9:15 a.m., EDT, Transponder 12D
(Repeat of Saturday transmission)

OFFMIKE

NAFB PRESIDENT...Lynn Ketelsen (Linder Farm Network, Willmar, Minn.) and Ed Slusarczyk (Ag Radio Network, Utica, N.Y.), chairman of the NAFB tour committee, have returned from a one-week tour of Poland. They met government officials, visited farms and toured port facilities in preparation for NAFB sponsored trips June 26-July 5 and later this year. The trips should prove to be eye-openers for all who join the tour.

TOO MUCH RAIN...is holding up field work in Mississippi. John Winfield (Mississippi Network, Jackson) says cotton planting is just around the corner. Increased cotton acreage is expected in the state, with soybeans about the same as last year. John says dampness has allowed rust to develop in some winter wheat, but it is not widespread yet.

STOPPING...by the office this week was Mike Rogers (Michigan Farm Bureau, Lansing). He provided welcomed feedback regarding his use of our radio and TV service.

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Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

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OATS...are in the ground in some sections of Wisconsin, and alfalfa planting is underway says John Zimmerman (Wisconsin Farm Broadcasting Network, Madison). Topsoil moisture is sufficient for planting but timely rains will be needed to produce a crop. John says new machinery is moving off dealer lots, especially small-ticket items. Used equipment that is in good shape continues to command top prices.

OUR THANKS...to Sherry Newell (WJON/WWJO, St. Cloud, Minn.). She provided USDA radio with an audiotape feed of Sec. Clayton Yeutter's speech to the Minneapolis meeting of Associated Milk Producers. We credited Sherry and her station, and with her permission used it on USDA's daily Newsline. Another example of one farm broadcaster helping others across the country.


VIC POWELL
Chief, Radio & TV Division